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Once Upon a Time

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ALL IN COLOUR - MAKES LEARNING A JOY

Once Upon a Time

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SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. Once upon a time, on a cold Winter's day, a Queen sat sewing on the balcony of the Royal Palace. She pricked her finger with the needle and a drop of blood fell on to the snow on the balcony ledge. "How I would love a child with a skin as white as that snow, lips as red as that spot of blood, and hair as black as ebony," said the Queen to a friendly red robin.



2. Before long her wish was granted. A lovely daughter was born, much to the joy of the King and herself. "What shall we call this delightful child?" the King said. "Had you any special name in mind?" "Yes—ever since the day when I made a wish and spoke to a red robin perched upon a snowy ledge," the happy Queen replied. "I shall call her Snow White."



3. Alas, when Snow White was only two, her mother died. It was a sad shock to the sweet child, but it was made even worse when the people of the country made the King marry again. It was a wonderful wedding and the new Queen looked very haughty and proud as she held the King's arm. But poor Snow White cried.



4. The new Queen was very lovely, but she was also very vain and cruel. On her wall hung a magic mirror and often she said to it: "Mirror, mirror on the wall. Who is the fairest of us all?" And the magic mirror would answer truthfully: "Lovely lady, mighty Queen, you are the fairest one, I ween."



5. However, as Snow White grew up, she became lovelier and lovelier. "How lucky I am," said the King, as he looked at Snow White and listened to her playing a harp. "No man could wish for a more beautiful daughter. She must be the fairest in all my Kingdom." As she heard this, the new Queen bit her lip and scowled. "We will see about that," she said.



6. Straight to the magic mirror went the Queen. Again she asked: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, Who is the fairest of us all?" Because it always told the truth, the mirror replied: "Lovely though you are, O Queen, Snow White is lovelier still, I ween." The Queen stamped her foot and shook her fist at the mirror, but could do nothing to change its answer.



7. In a rage, the Queen hurried out of the castle and sought out one of the Royal huntsmen. "I have a job for you," she said. "Do it well and you will be rewarded with much gold."

8. "What is the task, Your Majesty?" asked the huntsman. The Queen took a deep breath and then replied: "This night, you will take Snow White into the forest and see she does not return."

SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. The wicked Queen, Snow White's stepmother, had been told by the magic mirror on the wall that she was no longer the fairest in the land and she flew into a jealous rage. She commanded one of the Royal huntsmen to take Snow White into the forest and there get rid of her. All night long, the huntsman sat and watched Snow White playing with the animals.

2. "She is so sweet and kind," he thought. "How could I kill such a fair and gentle girl as that? Although the Queen has commanded me to do so, I cannot bring myself to perform such a wicked deed." "It's so lovely here in the forest," said Snow White, as she played and talked with the wild creatures. "I would be happy to stay here for ever and ever."



3. Hearing this, the huntsman chose a moment when Snow White was not looking and he stole quietly away through the trees and made his way back to the Palace. "I will tell the Queen that the forest animals have dealt with Snow White," he said.



4. Snow White was puzzled when she looked round and saw no sign of the huntsman. Having no idea of the way back to the Palace she wandered on and on until night fell. The kindly old trees seemed to be beckoning her towards a quaint old cottage.



5. The door was open and Snow White went in and lit a candle. She saw a table laid for supper, with seven plates and cups. "I wonder who lives here?" she said to herself. "Oh dear, I am so hungry that I'm sure they would spare me a little food. I will pay them back somehow." So Snow White sat down at the wooden table, ate some of the food and drank from a jug of milk.



6. Still nobody came and Snow White found herself yawning as she waited. "I'm so very tired after wandering all night and all day through the forest," she said. In the next room she found seven little beds. They looked so inviting that she could not resist lying down on one of them. She was so tired that as soon as her head touched the pillow she fell asleep.



7. When it was quite dark the owners of the cottage returned. They were seven little dwarfs, who worked all day in a mine underneath the mountains, digging for gold. They never found very much, but they were such happy little people that they just worked to get a good appetite for supper. Some of them carried shovels and some carried pick-axes on their shoulders.

8. "My, my!" said the youngest one, leading the way with a lantern on a pole. "We're nearly home, my brothers. Then we will eat our supper and pop off to bed as usual." "As usual?" chuckled Brock the Badger from his home in the roots of a tree. "They won't find everything as they left it, I'm afraid. The seven dwarfs are going to get a very big surprise."

SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. Happily returning home after working all day in the mine beneath the mountain digging for gold, the seven little dwarfs were very surprised to find that some of their supper had been eaten. "Who can have done this?" asked one. "Somebody has had a slice of our meat pie." "And a glass of milk," said another. "It's plain that we have had a strange visitor."



2. Then they went into the bedroom and saw Snow White asleep on one of the seven beds. "Bless my best whiskers—it's a beautiful girl," said one. The sound of his voice woke Snow White and she was frightened when she saw the little men, but they told her she would come to no harm and asked her who she was and where she had come from. Snow White told them.



3. "I do not want to go back to my stepmother—she hates me," Snow White explained. One of the dwarfs took her hand. "Then you don't need to go back to live with the wicked Queen," he said. "You can stay here and keep house for us."



4. Snow White was delighted to stay in the cottage and look after the seven little dwarfs and for a long time she lived there happily, cooking and cleaning and mending from dawn till dusk, after the merry dwarfs had gone off to their mine.



5. By this time the wicked Queen was sure that Snow White was dead. One day she said to the magic mirror on the wall: "Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who is the fairest of us all?" And back came the answer: "Over seven mountains, where seven dwarfs dwell, lives Snow White lovelier than words can tell." This shocked the Queen, for she knew the mirror always spoke truly.



6. "I must be rid of Snow White once and for all," she said. So she dressed as an old pedlar woman and made her way over the seven mountains to the cottage of the seven dwarfs. As she got nearer to the cottage she pretended to hobble a bit, making her face look sad and weary. "Ribbons and laces and pretty belts for sale," she said in a trembling sort of voice.



7. Snow White felt sorry for the frail old lady and let her in. "I will buy one of those pretty belts," she said. "And you must stay for a drink and something to eat." "Thank you, my dear," said the old woman. "Let me put it round your pretty waist." "Not too tightly!" said Snow White.



8. But the cunning Queen did pull the belt ever so tight and fastened it so that poor Snow White could not breathe. She gave a little gasp and then fell down on the floor in a deep faint. "Excellent!" chuckled the wicked Queen. Believing Snow White to be dead, she hurried away back to the palace.

SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. In the evening, on their way home from their gold-mine in the mountains, the seven happy dwarfs stopped to pick bunches of lovely flowers. "Ho-hum!" said one. "We have never done this before—but, of course, we have never had anyone so sweet and lovely as Snow White living in our little cottage."

2. What the dwarfs did not know was that the wicked Queen had visited the cottage. Disguised as a poor old pedlar woman she had sold Snow White a pretty belt, which she then tugged so tightly round her waist that poor Snow White fell to the floor in a faint and seemed likely to die, not being able to breathe.



3. Luckily, the dwarfs were just in time. They unbuckled the belt and helped Snow White to her feet, so that she very quickly revived. "You must be on your guard in future, Snow White," they told her. "Do not let any strangers into the cottage."



4. Meanwhile, the Queen was back in the Palace and she hurried to the magic mirror. "O Queen, I bring you gloomy news; your plan went wrong so now you lose," it told her. "The fairest one is still Snow White—she's still alive and quite all right."



5. At this the Queen flew into a rage and shook her fist in anger at the mirror. "You may well be speaking the truth, as you always do," she said, "But before long you will be telling me that Snow White, my step-daughter, is dead and no longer the fairest in the land." Once again she put on an old robe and went over the seven mountains to where the seven dwarfs lived.

6. Her black cat followed at her heels and mewed in surprise as the Queen took from her basket a pretty comb. "You may well ask what this is, puss," chuckled the Queen. "No girl will be able to resist using it on her hair—but it is a magic comb with a powerful poison in its teeth. When Snow White pulls it through her hair, she will fall down and die."



7. This time, when there was a knock on the door, Snow White was careful to open it only a little. "I am sorry, pedlar woman, I cannot invite you in," she said. The Queen smiled and showed her the pretty comb. "I'm only asking you to try this," she said. "You have such lovely black hair."



8. Snow White was tempted. Taking the comb, she shut the door and started to comb her hair. At the very first stroke she felt a strange shock and fell to the floor. The wicked Queen, peering through the window, chuckled at the sight. "This time, Snow White, I am rid of you forever," she said.

SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. As darkness was falling over the forest, Snow White's step-mother, the vain and wicked Queen, hurried away from the little cottage of the Seven Dwarfs. "At last I have done it," she was chuckling to herself. "Snow White has used the poisoned comb in her hair and she will not live long now. Nothing can save her." But the Queen was quite wrong, for help was near at hand.

2. The busy little Seven Dwarfs, returning from their work in the gold-mine in the mountains, caught a glimpse of the Queen hurrying away with her black cat. "She has called on Snow White for a second time," said one. "What evil has she been up to now?" "We will soon find out," said the others, and in great haste they ran towards the cottage to find Snow White.



3. Poor Snow White was found lying on the floor, looking limp and pale. "She does not breathe," gasped the youngest dwarf. "Lift her on to the bed." Tenderly they did this and as they moved Snow White the poisoned comb fell out of her lovely dark hair—and at once the colour came back into her white cheeks.



4. Her eyes fluttered open and she got up. "I feel a little wobbly on my legs, but much better," she said. "Thank you, my dear friends for rescuing me." "You gave us such a fright," the dwarfs told her. "Promise us that you will be careful in future, if that wicked Queen comes to try any more evil tricks."



5. Back in the Palace, the Queen was so sure that she had got rid of Snow White that she went straight to the magic mirror. "And now, O mirror on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?" she asked. Back came the answer: "I only speak of what is true—your spell did fail, it is not YOU!" replied the mirror. In great rage the Queen turned away, shaking her fist.



6. "I must be more clever with my plans," she said to herself. "This time I will use a magic poisoned apple." In secret she got everything ready. First she got a ripe apple and held it over a bowl while she poured over the red half of it a powerful poison. So carefully and cunningly did she do it that the apple was not touched by the poison on the green side.



7. As the second part of her plan, the wicked Queen muttered another magic spell which changed her good looks to those of a wrinkled-faced old woman with a long nose. Then off she went.

8. "One tiny bite of the red part of this apple will swiftly poison Snow White," she chuckled. "I will make sure that she will not be able to resist it."

SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. Disguised as an old gypsy woman selling fruit, the wicked Queen went over the seven mountains to the cottage of the Seven Dwarfs and knocked on the front door. "Please let me in, sweet missy," she whined. "I'm only a poor woman with some apples to sell." "I would like some, but I'm really not allowed to buy things at the door," replied Snow White.



2. "Come, come, my dear, apples like these are too good to miss," cackled the Queen. "See how ripe they are. I will take a bite out of one and show you." She took a bite, but was careful to take it from the green side of the apple, which had no poison on it. Seeing that the old gypsy suffered no harm, Snow White let her in and bought the poison apple.



3. It looked so tasty that Snow White could not resist taking a bite. But the moment she tasted the rosy, poisoned side, she felt her throat burning and her head going all dizzy. "At last I have done it," said the Queen as Snow White fell down.



4. That night, when the Seven Dwarfs returned from their gold-mine in the mountains, they found poor Snow White lying on the floor and could not revive her. "She is dead," sobbed one. Broken-hearted, the Seven Dwarfs cried and cried and cried.



5. Sadly, walking about on the tips of their toes and speaking only in hushed whispers, the Seven Dwarfs made a beautiful glass coffin. They laid Snow White in it and gathered round it in the light of a lantern. Some of the animals from the forest came to the front door and looked in, very sad and sorrowful, for they too had grown to love Snow White very dearly.



6. In the morning, dressed in their dark clothes and carrying their hats in their hands, the Seven Dwarfs began a most sad and solemn procession to the mountains. "We will put Snow White in our mine," they said. "There, she will always be near to us and we will remember the sweet times when she was alive and gay and brought so much happiness to our home."



7. Outside the entrance to the mine, the Seven Dwarfs halted and placed the glass coffin on a mound of earth. "Now let us sing a song of sorrow," they said. They had only tiny voices, but the song they sang was like the moaning of the wind—a strange sound, which floated in and out of the valleys, and attracted the notice of a handsome Prince on a white horse.

8. The Prince looked across the valley to the mine and he was puzzled by what he saw. "Seven dwarfs and a glass coffin?" he said to himself. "What is the meaning of all this? And what do I see inside the glass coffin, lying so still? It is indeed a most lovely young lady. I must go closer and ask those dwarfs how such a dreadful thing could have happened."

SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. Because she had taken a bite out of a poisoned apple given to her by the wicked Queen, poor Snow White did not breathe or move. She lay in a glass coffin on a mound of earth outside the mountain-mine of the Seven Dwarfs. Bare-headed and with tears in their eyes, the little men sang a sad hymn of sorrow and their voices brought a young Prince on to the scene.

2. "Poor sweet girl—how beautiful she looks," sighed the handsome Prince. "What happened to her?" When they had ended their hymn of sadness, the Seven Dwarfs spoke in hushed voices and told the Prince about the wicked Queen, Snow White's step-mother. "Twice she tried but failed to harm Snow White," they said. "But now, at the third try, she has unhappily succeeded."



3. The Prince looked at Snow White for a long time. "Although she is not alive, I have fallen deeply in love with her," he said to the Seven Dwarfs. "I cannot bear to be parted from her, so please let me take her to my palace." The sad little men were so touched by this that they agreed and picked up the coffin.



4. But as they did so, the glass coffin slipped from the heap of earth and one end jolted on the ground. It was this sudden bump that jerked the piece of poisoned apple out of Snow White's throat and she sat up and looked around. "Wonder of wonders, she lives!" shouted the Seven Dwarfs. "Snow White is alive!"



5. The Prince rushed forward and, gathering Snow White in his strong arms, he lifted her on to the saddle of his horse. "What I said about falling deeply in love was true," he said. "Now I shall take her to my palace—and Snow White shall become the loveliest Queen of all." How the Seven Dwarfs capered around with joy, filling their hats with flowers and cheering loudly.



6. Meanwhile, in the Royal Palace, the wicked Queen stood at an open window, looking out over the Kingdom. "Snow White will never be heard of again," she said. "Now it is certain that I am the fairest in all the land. There is no one else as beautiful as me—but just to make sure I will speak again to the magic mirror on the wall and hear its truthful answer."

SNOW-WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs



1. "Magic mirror on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?" asked the wicked Queen—and the answer she got back was not the one she expected. "I only speak of what is true—the fairest one is still not YOU!" replied the mirror. "Snow White's not dead as you had planned, so SHE is fairest in the land." When she heard this, the Queen struck the mirror with a candlestick.



2. "It cannot be possible!" she shrieked. But it was really true. Thanks to the arrival of a handsome Prince, Snow White had recovered from the effects of the poisoned apple given to her by the jealous Queen. The magic mirror knew this—and then, as the angry Queen struck it blow after blow with the heavy candlestick, it fell from the wall and landed heavily on top of her.



3. That was the end of the wicked Queen, but no one shed a tear of sorrow for such a vain and cruel person. Next day, a town crier came to the market place and rang his bell for attention.

4. "Hear ye, hear ye!" he called out. "Let it be known this day that the sweetest and fairest Princess of all, by the name of Snow White, will be married to the Prince who rescued her."



5. And so it was. The church steeple bells rang out and the people cheered when they saw the Prince and his bride. "Snow White is truly the fairest of all," they shouted.

6. As you might well have expected, the most important guests at the gay wedding were the Seven Dwarfs. All dressed in their best, they led the way, feeling very proud of sweet Snow White.



